Paul Sprunk View-Master Artist

J. Clement

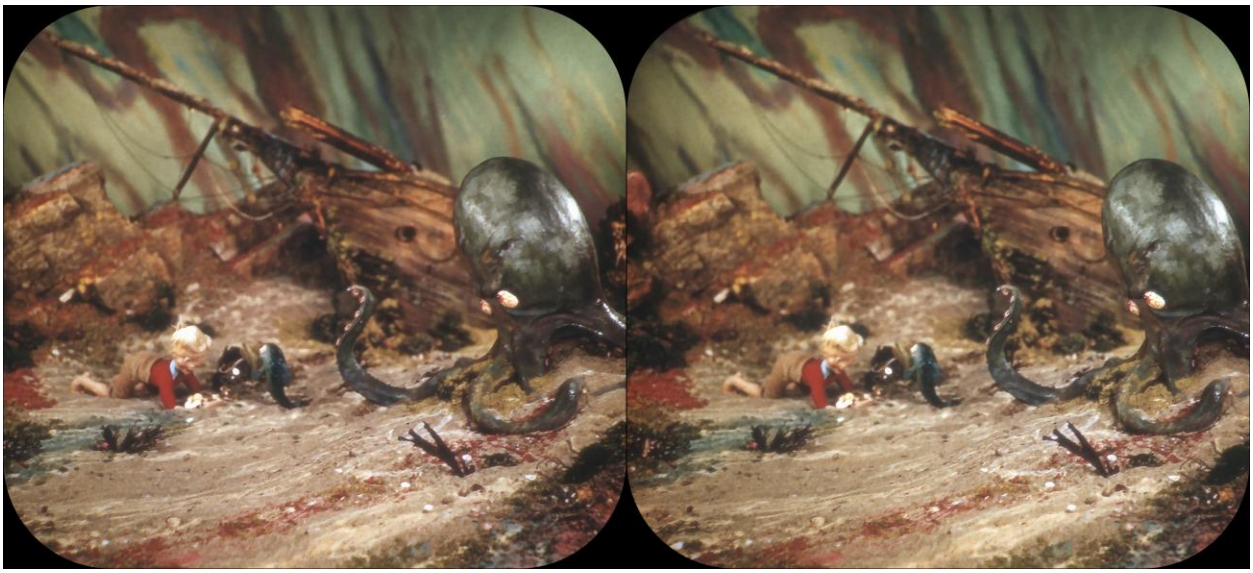
Revised October 2025

Paul Sprunk (1892-1963) was commissioned by Sawyers to create their own character, Sam Sawyer in 1950. He was never credited in the accompanying booklets. He had already worked on Hollywood films as a miniature artist and had his own film studio. He created a 3D stop action animated film, "The Adventures of Sam Space", which was never released in 3D to the US theaters. It has been resurrected on the 3D Blu-Ray "3D Rarities". Paul also created a number of dioramas for 3D Stori-View cards. Not much appears to be available about this good miniature artist. Some details are available in "View-Master Memories" by Mary Anne and Wolfgang Sell, Charley VanPelt. It is possible that Sprunk worked on the early View-Master fairy tale reels, as they are credited to Hollywood artists.

The Stori-View cards contained either one or two scenes per card, with 6 or 12 scenes per story. The film type originally used was Kodachrome, but many later cards were created using an inferior film that faded to magenta. Church-Craft originally released bible stories, created by Cecil B. DeMille, on View-Master, but then invented their own 3D product in competition with View-Master. The film size was the same as View-Master's. Stori-View released a number of scenics especially a cowboy-horse series, but never had a large catalog unlike View-Master.

Unfortunately Sam Sawyer was not as popular as other characters which were heavily advertised and were shown on TV or movies, so the series was not continued beyond the first 6 reels. The acquisition by Sawyers of Disney rights also gave the company many more marketable characters. Both his View-Master reels and Stori-View cards appear on web auction sites.

SAM-1 Sam flies to the Moon 4 Sam fights Moonmen with paralyzer gun
This scene is also on blu-ray "3D Rarities"

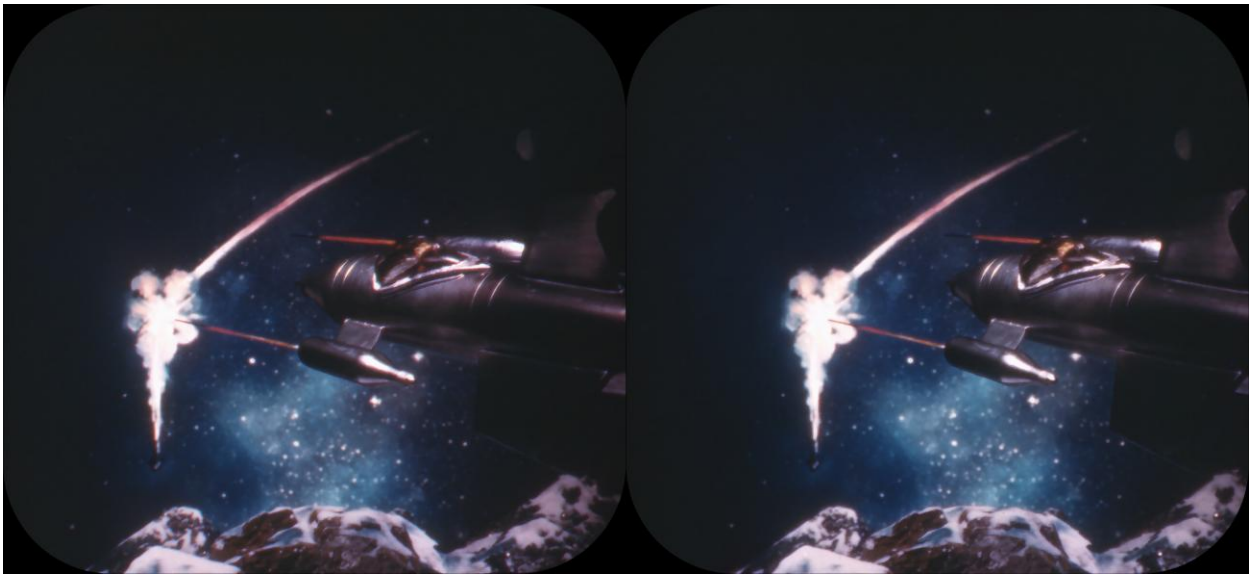


SAM-2 Sam finds a treasure 4 Otto Octopus creeps up on Sam and Paul

SAM-3 Sam in the Land of Giants 3 Sam visits Hank and his brother Crank

SAM-4 Sam in darkest Africa 5 Sam shoots a Thanksgiving bird for the King's banquet

SAM-5 Sam in the Land of Ice 2 They enter the icy land of the snow dwarfs



SAM-6 Sam Sawyer & The Flying Saucer Pirates 2
Atomic dischargers blow up the saucer from outer space
This scene is also on Blu-ray "3D Rarities"

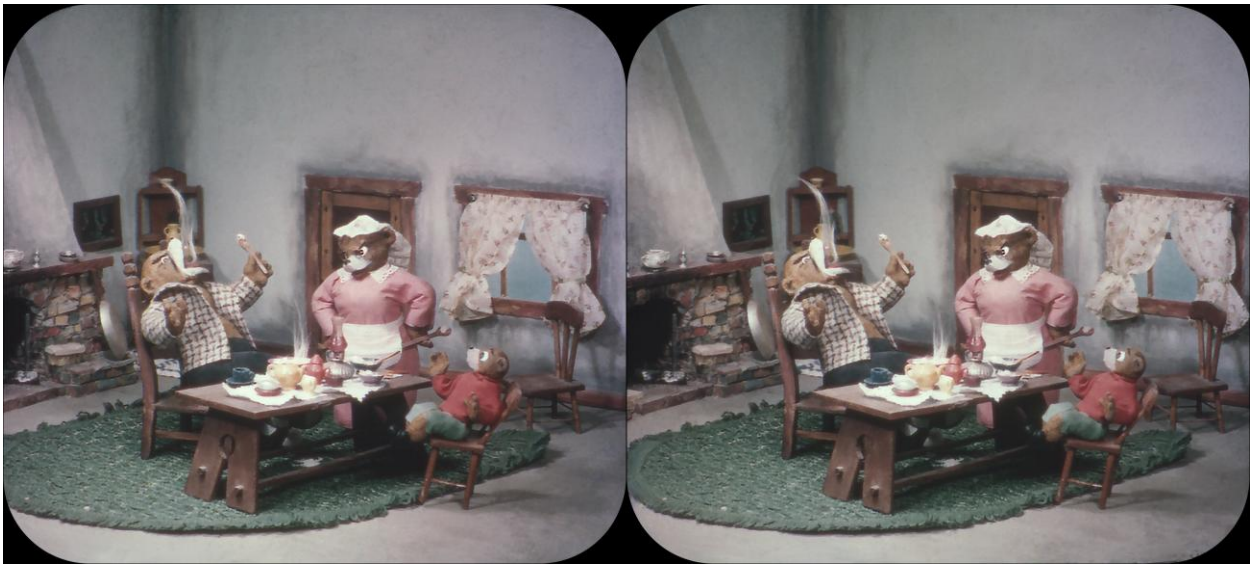
The leaflets with the reels had fairly simple line drawings.
(Restoration and 3D conversion by J. Clement)

Paul Sprunk also created dioramas for the Stori-View 3D cards. Stori-View or Pixie-View cards were a minor player in creating 3D scenes and viewers, but Sprunk's dioramas are just as good as the ones on View-Master and he created more Stori-View than View-Master scenes. The early Kodachrome cards were the equal of View-Master. The following Stori-View cards are by Paul Sprunk.

Stori-View 701 3 Jack and the Beanstalk - Jack plants the magic bean he traded for the cow

Stori-View 701 07 Jack and the Beanstalk - Jack watches the giant eat

Jack was originally published as 701 with 12 instead of 6 scenes. The Jack scenes have a wonderfully horrible giant who is much bigger than the giant on View-Master reels. The final scene of the giant's fall is much more dramatic than the View-Master versions.



Stori-View 402 1 Goldilocks and Three Bears - "My porridge is too hot!"

402 was also originally published as 702 with 12 scenes. The rest of the Three Bears cards are very nice, but this one really lets you know how the porridge was too hot. The porridge too hot scene is much more dramatic than the View-Master scene. Sprunk has great 3D depth with his through the window final scene.

Stori-View 702 12 Goldilocks and Three Bears - Goldilocks runs home

Stori-View 703 02 Cinderella - The royal proclamation

Cinderella was originally published in 12 scenes as 703, but later cut down to 6 scenes as 403. Cinderella has some lovely scenes especially the one where she is leaving the ball and then where she is crying in the woods. The town above with its tipsy buildings is very interesting. Every scene has Moitz, her mouse friend. It follows the best known story by Perrault

Stori-View 403 5 Cinderella – When Cinderella tried on the slipper her rags turned into a gown

Stori-View 404 3 Hansel and Gretel - "Come on in and I'll give you a big supper"

These early Stori-View Kodachromes tend to be a bit dark, but the later ones are overexposed with loss of detail, and incorrect 3D framing. 404 with 6 scenes was originally published as 704 with 12 scenes. Hansel and Gretel has nice scenes with the inverted A frame house. The house style wider at the top than the bottom appears in several of Sprunk's dioramas. His houses tend to be a bit tipsy without any right angles. The witch is surprisingly dressed in gold and green with red striped stockings. The nice neat kitchen has a traditional large Delft tile stove similar to those in central Europe.

Stori-View 704 10 Hansel and Gretel - Gretel pushes the witch

Stori-View 405 3 The Three Little Pigs - Piggy Fat's house

Stori-View 405 6 The Three Little Pigs - "Family reunion"

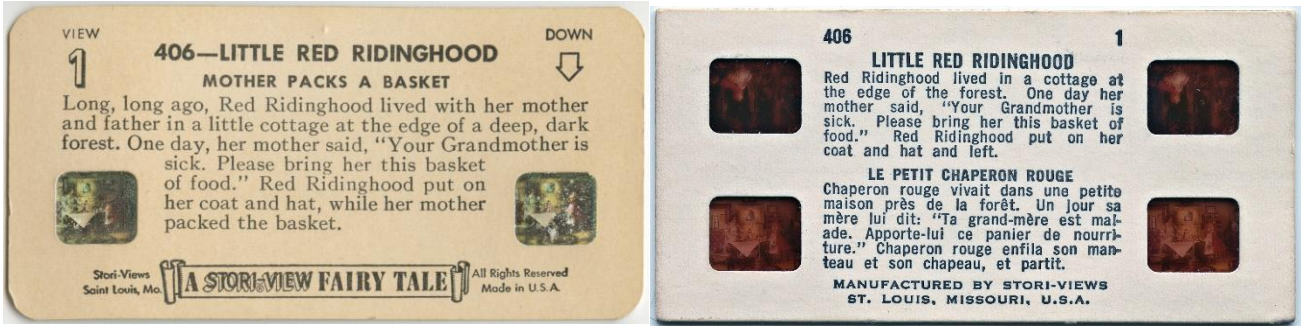
These scenes differ from the View-Master reels in many ways. The wolf is dapper and visits one of the pigs at night, but runs away in the end rather than the usual wolf dead in the cooking pot. One of the pigs is a sister and the mother appears in two scenes. The scenes are atmospheric with excellent depth. View-Master published 2 different reels of the same subject created by Florence Thomas and Joe Liptak. They are conventional, but different. Florence has the apple tree scene, while Joe shows the pigs leaving home and his pigs are a bit more cartoonish. Both have the wolf in the cooking pot at the end. This set of 6 was originally published as R707 with 12 scenes.

Stori-View 406A 1 Little Red Ridinghood - Mother packs a Basket

The view above was from an early Stori-View card. The later faded cards had a wider aspect ratio and too much pop out. The frame was just front of the back wall plane which created a very disturbing image. They were reframed to use more of the original slide and have a wide-screen aspect ratio which created the extreme pop-out. Some pop-out can add interest when done carefully, but it can create difficulties with viewing, and flatten the perspective. The pop out was variable and some of the late production scenes were OK.

Stori-View 406C 1 Little Red Ridinghood - Mother packs a Basket
Restoration from faded card by J. Clement

The first edition cards had single scenes, then the second edition double scene cards were produced sometimes using Kodachrome. Finally, they produced the third edition wide aspect double scenes with an inferior film that faded, with often too much pop out. The third edition had both abbreviated English and French text. The 406series views were also published as 12 views on number 708 cards.


VIEW
1
406—LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD
DOWN
MOTHER PACKS A BASKET
Long, long ago, Red Ridinghood lived with her mother and father in a little cottage at the edge of a deep, dark forest. One day, her mother said, "Your Grandmother is sick. Please bring her this basket of food." Red Ridinghood put on her coat and hat, while her mother packed the basket.
Stori-Views
Saint Louis, Mo.
A STORI-VIEW FAIRY TALE
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406
1
LITTLE RED RIDINGHOOD
Red Ridinghood lived in a cottage at the edge of the forest. One day her mother said, "Your Grandmother is sick. Please bring her this basket of food." Red Ridinghood put on her coat and hat and left.
LE PETIT CHAPERON ROUGE
Chaperon rouge vivait dans une petite maison près de la forêt. Un jour sa mère lui dit: "Ta grand-mère est malade. Apporte-lui ce panier de nourriture." Chaperon rouge enfila son manteau et son chapeau, et partit.
MANUFACTURED BY STORI-VIEWS
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI, U.S.A.

The first edition Stori-View card on left has unfaded images. The third edition on the right has faded images with wide aspect ratio. Scene 2 was on the reverse side.

Stori-View 406A 6 Little Red Ridinghood - Father saves Red Ridinghood

This is one of the scariest action endings in Red Riding Hood 3D scenes. The violence is obvious and the wolf appears vicious. The final scenes on View-Master are more static and either show the wolf as dazed, safely dead, or being kicked away. View-Master published 3 different single reels of Red Ridinghood and an early Tru-Vue card by Joe Liptak. The earliest were both labeled FT-1 by anonymous Hollywood artists, and later by Florence Thomas. A later whimsical one, B3101, was by Joe Liptak. The 6 views by Sprunk in 406 were originally published as 708 with 12 views.

Paul Sprunk created very good dioramas for Stori-View, but he often used articulated figures with the same facial expression in every scene. This was disguised a bit by posing the figures from different angles, but the expressions were not always appropriate to the scene. Sambo does have two different expressions which are used more than once. Some View-Master artists did the same thing. The diorama View-Master packet of Robin Hood is a prime example of where the expressions never change.

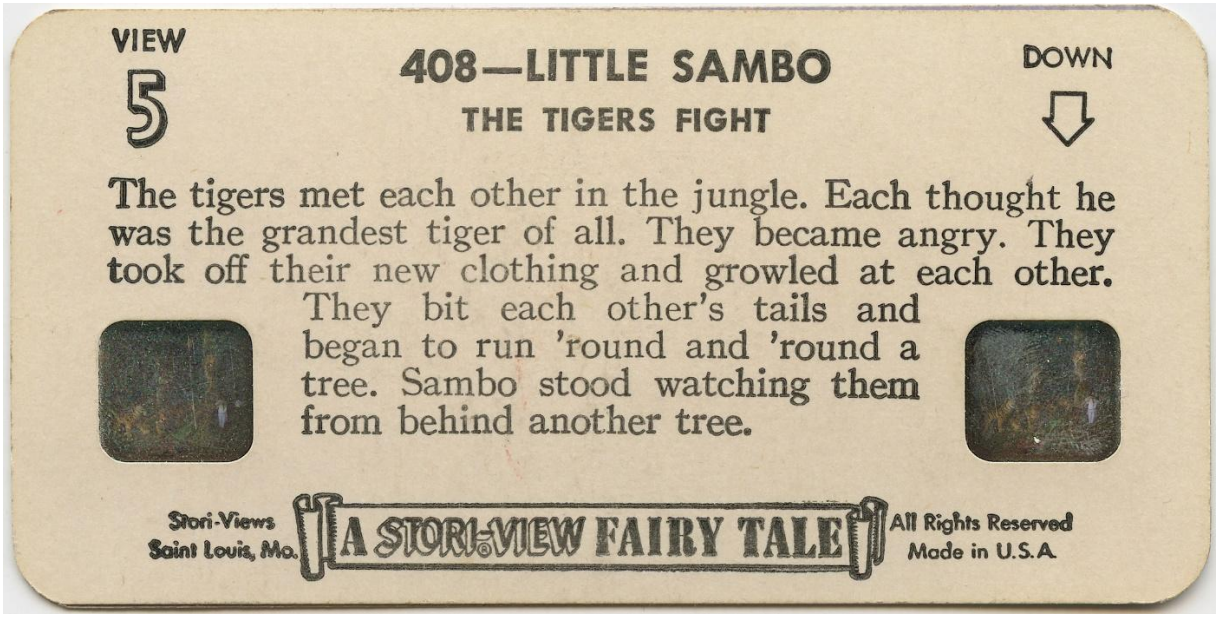
Stori-View 407 1 Night Before Christmas - Not a creature stirring

Stori-View 407 2 Night Before Christmas - Away to the window

This is a nicely done set, but it lacks the wonderful sleigh flight images on the View-Master reels. Santa is decidedly earth bound. The initial scene of the house is quite beautiful. View-Master had 3 Night before Christmas sets. The first single reel by Florence Thomas had beautiful flying reindeer. The second rare whimsical single reel by Joe Liptak uses the mouse as a protagonist. The third cute three reel set by Lelia Heath has the dog and son in the scenes with the father. This 6 card set may not have been published as a series 700 12 card set.

One wonders why they never use the mother as the narrator. There is one reference to “mamma in her kerchief and I in my cap” which could be reversed.

Stori-View 408 5 Sambo – The tigers fight


VIEW
5
408—LITTLE SAMBO
THE TIGERS FIGHT
DOWN
The tigers met each other in the jungle. Each thought he was the grandest tiger of all. They became angry. They took off their new clothing and growled at each other. They bit each other's tails and began to run 'round and 'round a tree. Sambo stood watching them from behind another tree.
Stori-Views
Saint Louis, Mo.
A STORI-VIEW FAIRY TALE
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This is the Sambo first edition production. The Third edition production had too much pop-out in a couple of scenes. Faded cards vary a lot so some restore with very good colors, while others have off colors, poor saturation, and lots of noise. View-Master also had 2 different Sambo productions. One reel was created by Florence Thomas with beautiful lush scenes. The other was by Joe Liptak on faded Tru-Vue cards with a sparse background but scenes with surprising angles and great depth. Joe's tiger striped pancakes were a nice touch. This 6 card set may not have been published as a series 700 12 card set.

Stori-View 452 4 Tom Sawyer - Tom whitewashes the fence
(The figurines are obviously articulated puppets with wooden feet.)

The Tom Sawyer and Peter and the Wolf sets are possibly not by Paul Sprunk as the other dioramas do not obviously use wooden puppets. Series 452 with 6 scenes was originally published as R781 with 12 scenes. View-Master did not have Tom Sawyer reels.

Stori-View 780 08 Peter and the Wolf – The koopoo bird warns Peter

Peter and the Wolf is very cartoonish with some animals very nonrealistic, It has been moved to what looks like a Lousiana swamp.. Peter looks like a doll with hands that are too big. Sprunk did use what looks like obvious doll parts in his early fairy tales. But, Cinderella's mouse friend has stick figure legs, so it is hard to judge from character style whether these were created by Sprunk. Scene 1 has Peter's House shaped the same way as other Sprunk work, which makes it likely that it is by Sprunk. The story is basically the same as the Disney/Prokofiev cartoon, but the look and names have been changed, probably to avoid copyright infringement. View-Master did not have any Tom Sawyer reels.

Stori-View 780 12 Peter and the Wolf - Off to the Zoo!-LR

The information about the authors of these 3D views came from *View-Master Memories* by Mary Ann & Wolfgang Sell.

View-Master reels by Paul Sprunk in 1951:

1. SAM-1 Sam flies to the Moon
2. SAM-2 Sam finds a Treasure
3. SAM-3 Sam in the Land of Giants
4. SAM-4 Sam in Darkest Africa
5. SAM-5 Sam in the Land of Ice
6. SAM-6 Sam Sawyer and the Flying Saucer Pirates

Stori-View 6 scene set possibly all by Paul Sprunk in the early 1950s
The 700 series are the early 12 scene sets. The list shows which 700 series scenes are in the 400 sets.

1. 401 Jack and the Beanstalk (701 4,5,6,8,10,12)
2. 402 Goldilocks and the Three Bears (702 1,3,5,7,9,11)
3. 403 Cinderella (703 3,6,7,10,11,12)
4. 404 Hansel and Gretel (704 2,5,7,8,11,12)
5. 405 Three Little Pigs (R707 2,4,6,8,9,12)
6. 406 Little Red Riding Hood (708 1,4,7,8,10,11)
7. 407 Night Before Christmas
8. 408 Little Sambo
9. 451 Peter and the Wolf (780)
10. 452 Tom Sawyer (R781 1,8,9,3,11,12)

This article was created from cards purchased by the author and information gleaned from other cards seen on Ebay. At present in 2022 there is no comprehensive index of Stori-View cards. As the cards have no dating unlike View-Master, the dates of production are unknown. Scans of the scenes are in the accompanying ZIP files, but 780 and R707 series cards are incomplete.

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Goldilocks and the Three Bears
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☐ Cinderella ☐ Jack and the Beanstalk ☐ Goldilocks and 3 Bears
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Name.....
Address.....
City & State.....
☐ Check enclosed for $.....
☐ Send Complete list of Stori-Views Printed in U.S.A.
Form No. FT051

Insert in early Fairy Tale Stori-View box dated 1950. This is confirmation that Paul Sprunk created the first 3 fairy tales as reported by the Sells. The listing on the back of the box does not show any other fairy tales at that point in time. There is also a picture of Sprunk with figures from two of these early fairy tales. Only the first 3 sets of fairy tales can be confirmed as created by Sprunk, but the numbering and image style suggest that 401-408 are all by him. 451 and 452 may be by another artist, or just created at a later date by him.

The 400 series cards are often available on Ebay. The 700 series cards are more rare but 704 and higher are very rare.

Paul Sprunk probably in his workshop with the giant from Jack and the Beanstalk, and Mamma and Pappa Bear from Goldilocks.
3D conversion by J. Clement